Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 03466 192142Z

45
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 USIA-15 TRSE-00 MBFR-03

SAJ-01 COME-00 EB-11 COA-02 SS-15 NSC-10 RSR-01

ACDA-19 IO-13 /151 W
---------- 001216
P R 191855Z JUL 73
FM USMISSION NATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 898
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRILRITY
USCINCEUR PRIORITY
CINCLANT PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 3466

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/79
TAGS: PFOR, IC, NATO, UK
SUBJECT: UK-ICELAND FISHERIES DISPUTE

1. ICELANDIC DEPUTY PERMREP EGILSSON TELEPHONED MISSOFF THIS AFTERNOON TO INQUIRE WHETHER THE US NAVY HAD CONDUCTED ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE EXERCISES OFF THE COAST OF NORWAY ON JUNE 30. OUR GENTLE PROBING AS TO WHY HE WANTED TO KNOW AT FIRST ELICITED AN EVASIVE RESPONSE. A FEW MINUTES LATER EGILSSON CALLED BACK TO SAY THAT HE HAD READ A NEWS REPORT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE BRITISH FRIGATE PLYMOUTH, ONE OF THE SHIPS PATROLLING INSIDE THE 50-MILE LIMIT, WAS GOING TO SCANDINAVIA TO TAKE PART IN NATO EXERCISES THERE. NEWS ITEM APPEARED IN AN ICELANDIC NEWSPAPER ON JUNE 30 BASED ON REPORT EMANATING FROM THE LONDON BUREAU OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS ON JUNE 29.

2. EGILSSON EMPHASIZED THAT HE WAS CALLING ON A PURELY PERSONAL CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NATO 03466 192142Z

BASIS, NOT ON BASIS OF INSTRUCTIONS. HE COMMENTED THAT IF TRUE, THE NEWS WOULD BE CONSIDERED "MOST IMPORTANT" AND COULD GIVE AMMUNITION TO THOSE ELEMENTS IN ICELAND ATTEMPTING TO INVOLVE NATO IN THE UK-ICELAND FISHING DISPUTE.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

3. EGILSSON WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE WAS PLEASED TO LEARN THAT THE FIRST SHIPS USED BY THE UK INSIDE THE 50-MILE LIMIT WERE NOT REPEAT NOT ONES THAT HAD BEEN EARMARKED FOR NATO. HE WONDERED, HOWEVER, ON THE BASIS OF THE NEWS REPORT IF THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE SO THAT THERE NOW EXISTS A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UK AND NATO IN THE DISPUTE.

4. EGILSSON CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT IN ANY EVENT, THE US "HAD NO RESPONSIBILITY" BECAUSE MOVEMENT OF PLYMOUTH WOULD HAVE BEEN DECIDED BY THE BRITISH THEMSELVES.

5. THIS ISSECOND QUERY FROM EGILSSON ON SAME SUBJECT. HE CALLED INITIALLY LAST WEEK. OUR INFORMAL CHECK WITH EUCOM AT THAT TIME REVEALED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A US NAVY EXERCISE ON JUNE 30 WEST OF THE BRITISH ISLES,BUT NOT IN THE NORWEGIAN SEA. WE SO INFORMED EGILSSON; HE WOULD NOT DIVULGE REASON FOR HIS REQUEST. HIS CALL AGAIN TODAY ILLUSTRATES WELL-KNOWN ICELANDIC SENSITIVITIES AND SERIOUSNESS THEY ATTACH TO MATTER.

6. WE INTEND MAKING NO MENTION OF THIS TO BRITISH COLLEAGUES HERE.

7. FOR CINCEUR AND CINCLANT: WE WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING IF THERE WERE ANY US OR NATO NAVAL EXERCISES IN THE NORWEGIAN SEA ON JUNE 30; AREA OF THE EXERCISE, AND NATIONALITY OF SHIPS IN THE EXERCISE FORCE. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE KNOWING IF PLYMOUTH DID INDEED JOIN FORCE, AS ALLEGED.

8. FOR AMEMB REYKJAVIK: WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING TEXT OF AP NEWS STORY, IF AVAILABLE.

9. FOR WASHINGTON: UPON RECEIPT OF REQUESTED INFORMATION WE WILL ADVISE WASHINGTON AS TO SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO EGILSSON.
RUMSFELD

CONFIDENTIAL

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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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Disposition Reason:
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30 JUN 2005

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REYKJAVIK PRILRITY
USCINCEUR
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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